

GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS  
A. F. & M. S.

FOR THE USE  
OF THE  
**MASTER MASON**



BOOK No. 1

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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*May, 1950.*

# THE THIRD STEP

*To be presented to the Recipient  
of the*

MASTER MASON DEGREE

YOU HAVE NOW been "raised" to the sublime degree in Freemasonry. You have now figuratively passed through all the stages of human life and have been made acquainted with the most profound teachings symbolized by the Temple of Solomon and the Spiritual Temple of man. Doubtless you will require time to reflect upon the ceremony with its many excellent charges and lectures. Some of these are emphasized in this booklet.

First, however, you should be aware that certain portions of the ceremony should be memorized and that you should know the answers to certain questions which you may be asked. These concern various pieces of information and instruction to which you are entitled. A good knowledge of this degree will greatly facilitate your entrance into any Masonic Lodge which you may wish to visit. If you are a Freemason, and not merely a member of a Lodge, you will insist on securing all the information possible.

## YOUR ENTRANCE

Your preparation for this degree and your reception again differed somewhat

from your previous experiences and the conditions in the Lodge Room were quite unusual. You will recall the situation and the stress upon the importance of Morality, Virtue, and Brotherly Love, and the beautiful prayer for strength and guidance.

Your journey now included three circuits and a test of your knowledge of the secrets of the previous degree.

Your approach to the central and sacred point in the Lodge was fraught with greater difficulty, involving association with the final resting-place of all human flesh.

Your reception among the brethren of the degree imposed on you a most solemn obligation, reminding you of your sacred duties towards those brethren. These were not inconsistent with a moral and spiritual attitude towards your fellow-man.

## THE TEACHINGS

The philosophy and symbolism of the degree are associated with Old Age and the closing experiences of man's mortal existence. The beautiful retrospect of your previous Masonic experiences served to emphasize the solemn, moral and spiritual precepts which you, as a Freemason, were, and are, expected to obey.

The ceremony stressed your previous teaching and experience as a preparation

for the supreme test — the realization that death is a mere incident leading to a greater and fuller spiritual experience to come.

To every thoughtful Freemason — and your brethren believe you are one — the ceremony of being raised to rejoin your brethren must serve to symbolize the Resurrection and Life Eternal.

Your fellowship with your brethren was emphasized and symbolized by five points: *recognition of a brother, lawful support, prayerful guidance in dealing with the afflictions and necessities of life, faithful adherence to secrecy, and the preservation of a brother's honour, pure and undefiled.*

No one could fail to be impressed by the recitation of the first seven verses of Ecclesiastes XII. This beautiful, poetic, and symbolic reference to the closing days of Old Age is unequalled in sacred or other literature. It is well worth memorizing.

Your successful conquest of the King of Terrors was symbolized by the bright morning star, the emblem of the M.H. who brings comfort and hope to the "obedient of the human race." Here again faith, hope, obedience and guidance by the Deity are emphasized as a part of Masonic doctrine.

### THE HIRAMIC LEGEND

The story of Hiram, one of the Grand

Masters during the building of King Solomon's Temple, runs throughout the ceremony and, indeed, in parts of it you were his representative. The historical lecture which followed your instructions in the secrets of the degree was a partial repetition and further development of the legend.

A proper respect for the dead, the symbolism of continuous life through the Acacia, and the apprehension and punishment of the culprits served as a satisfactory ending to the story.

There are many examples of faithful adherence to duty, even unto death, in sacred and profane literature. One cannot emphasize too strongly that obedience to laws, rules and regulations is the foundation of civilized society. It, therefore, behooves every Freemason to recall the injunctions outlined in the first degree as the basis of good citizenship, and to keep ever before him the exemplary devotion to duty of one of the "brightest characters recorded in the annals of Freemasonry."

Legends relative to three rulers are common in many primitive religions. The death of one and subsequent resurrection in some form is referred to in the Egyptian Mysteries and may be found in other ancient cults. Perhaps enough has been intimated to induce the earnest student

to delve further into these obscure and hidden mysteries.

### THE CHART AND CHARGE

There is a chart on which the symbolism of this degree is depicted and an explanation of the same may be found.

The concluding charge is brief but filled with admonition and instruction. It emphasizes responsibility towards junior brethren, and urges such a life as will exemplify the fundamentals on which the Fraternity is based. Why not commit it to memory?

### THE FINAL INJUNCTION

You have now enjoyed the privileges and experiences of every brother Master Mason. Your brethren hope that you will take full advantage of every opportunity to increase in Masonic Knowledge and to assist in every activity of your Mother Lodge. It is only through the co-operation of every Freemason that this great brotherhood can flourish and exercise the utmost influence for right living. We believe that you stand steadfastly in support of Masonic teachings, and we believe that you wish to aid in the promulgation of moral truth and virtue. Your brethren are counting on your punctual attendance and assistance.

### OTHER MASONIC ORGANIZATIONS .

Now that you have completed the work

of the Craft Lodge, that is, you have obtained the three degrees and have become a Master Mason, a friend may ask you to join what he may call a "higher" Masonic body where you will be given "higher" degrees. *There are no higher degrees*; there are other degrees which elaborate and dramatize the principles you have already been taught in the Craft Lodge, but when you know the teachings of the three degrees, *you know, or have the opportunity to know, all there is in Freemasonry.*

There are organizations of Freemasons which though their aims are good and their service to humanity excellent, are not officially recognized by our Grand Lodge. Then there are clandestine lodges and grand lodges (Chinese, Italian, French, Negro, etc.), which you must never visit under any circumstances. The reason such as these are not recognized is chiefly that they may be political or, in some cases atheistic. And don't be in a hurry to seek admission to any of those other bodies; you have much to learn yet in the Craft Lodge.

You may be invited to become a member of a Chapter (Royal Arch Masons) and, later, of a Preceptory (Knights Templar). To proceed in that way is quite in order. You may wish to join the Scottish Rite. To that there is not the slightest objection. As you have observed, the three degrees



in the Craft Lodge are based on the history and the legend of the building of King Solomon's Temple. Similarly, the degrees in the other bodies mentioned are based on later portions of the Old Testament and finally on the Christian teachings of the New Testament.

The United Grand Lodge of England is the Mother Grand Lodge of the world; in procedure, in administration, in attitude and in outlook its example is, for the most part, followed by all other Grand Lodges in the English-speaking world. In each Province of Canada and in each State in the United States of America there is a Grand Lodge. Each of these Grand Lodges is sovereign in its own jurisdiction and is not responsible to any other. No Grand Lodge holds sway, in the slightest degree, over any other Grand Lodge; every one of them is absolutely independent.

If you wish to do some reading, as every Freemason should, in order to learn the history of Freemasonry and its philosophy, you are urged to make use of the Grand Lodge Library, of which you have been made a member. The Grand Librarian will recommend books for study. Members outside the City may obtain books by mail, without cost to themselves.

Always feel free to ask questions of the officers of your Lodge, they will welcome the opportunity to assist you.





